

II. METHODS

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

The historic architectural survey methodology for this project commenced with a field investigation to determine the presence of historic resources. This field investigation resulted in the identification of 14 historic architectural resources. URS staff then documented the appearance, condition, and integrity of these resources, both through photographs and field notes.

Upon completion of the field survey, URS staff examined the holdings of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DE SHPO) to determine if any of the resources had been previously surveyed and to identify cultural resource reports and studies of the project area. Six of the 14 resources were previously surveyed in 1981; the survey forms are housed at the DE SHPO. Although these resources were surveyed, none were assessed for their National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility. As a result, URS resurveyed this group and prepared survey update forms, as necessary. URS also conducted deed research at the Sussex County Recorder of Deeds in Georgetown to determine previous owners and help determine the construction dates of the buildings.

Using the data acquired during the background research and field survey phases, URS completed a Delaware Cultural Resource Survey Form for each resource (see Appendix B) and evaluated each resource to determine whether or not it met NRHP eligibility criteria.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Prior to initiating archaeological fieldwork, URS performed background research at a number of Delaware state repositories—including the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DE SHPO), the Delaware State Archives, and the state library—in order to determine whether any recorded archaeological sites exist within or adjacent to the project area. A search of the archaeological site files at the DE SHPO indicated that 11 previously surveyed loci exist within the project area, including two Woodland era prehistoric sites and nine structures. Background research also identified two previous surveys performed in the area in recent years. In 1999, Louis Berger and Associates, Inc., performed an architectural resource survey of the intersection of Routes 26 and 17 (Griffiths 1999); in 2002, McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc., conducted a cultural resources survey of the proposed State Route 26 improvements.

A total of 11 previously surveyed loci were identified within close proximity of the project area. Based on cultural resource survey forms found at the DE SHPO, most of these loci appear to have been located far enough off of the road to escape direct impact. However, only three of these surveyed loci have been given site numbers. These numbered sites include Site 9S-K-105 (an 1830–1880 artifact scatter identified in 1999) and Sites 9S-K-106 and 9S-K-107 (two sites with a Woodland I component); all three sites were located on the east side of State Route 84, where new construction homes have since been built, destroying the sites completely. Both of

the prehistoric sites contained a Woodland component yielding sand-tempered, net-impressed pottery and several pieces of lithic debitage of various materials including jasper, quartz, chert, and quartzite. The remaining eight loci were previously surveyed structures. The yards of two extant structures, for which cultural resource survey (CRS) forms exist, were tested. These structures separately occupy Test Areas #2 and #3. Neither has been nominated to the NRHP at this time.

The reconnaissance survey of the project area, prior to subsurface testing, served to identify areas where shovel testing would be conducted. Specifically, these areas are the intersections of State Routes 17 and 353, State Routes 353 and 352, State Routes 352 and 84, State Routes 84 and 368, and State Routes 368 and 362. These locations were designated Areas 1 through 5. In addition to the previously described locations, the USGS quad map for Bethany Beach (edited 1984) indicated a cemetery on the east side of State Route 17, approximately 1,100 feet north of the intersection of State Routes 353 and 352. A series of judgmentally placed shovel test pits (STPs) were excavated to sufficiently cover the five intersection locations. In addition, exposed ground surfaces were visually inspected for the presence of cultural materials. Testing in the area of the cemetery consisted of a surface reconnaissance and removal of any ground cover to determine the presence or absence of graves. An inventory, involving photography and the documentation of all inscribed information, was then conducted of all extant gravestones. All shovel tests were excavated stratigraphically to the maximum depth of disturbed soil or, whenever possible, sterile soil. If natural strata could not be clearly identified, excavation continued with 0.3-foot arbitrary levels. Soil from each stratum was screened through ¼-inch hardware mesh. Profiles were drawn for each shovel test with soils described using the Munsell soil color charts and standard texture classifications. Recovered artifacts were bagged according to their specific provenience. At the conclusion of field investigations, all excavated areas were backfilled, leveled, and left as close to original condition as possible. All areas tested were photodocumented with black-and-white print and color slide film.